



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® WISCONSIN

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TO: Wisconsin Dept. of Corrections Administrative Rules Committee

FROM: Andrea Kaminski, Executive Director, League of Women Voters of Wisconsin

RE: Comment on the Wisconsin Dept. of Corrections proposal on a permanent rule to repeal and recreate Wisconsin Administrative Code DOC Chapter 302, CR #17-026, relating to inmate classification, sentence and release provisions.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin believes that the "primary goal of criminal sanctions should be the protection of society through deterrence, incapacitation, and reform. Protection of society should be pursued with concern for preservation of rights of privacy and freedom of movement, due process to protect the innocent from victimization, and the prevention of inhumane punishment."

(<http://www.lwvwi.org/WhereWeStand/GovernmentAdministrationofJustice.aspx>) While protecting public safety, incarceration policy should be as efficient and cost effective as possible.

Therefore we offer the following comments on **Proposed Administrative Rules DOC 302.41, DOC 302.14 and DOC 302.15.**

Wisconsin allows for elderly and/or seriously ill inmates in state prisons to petition for compassionate release. Such people do not pose a threat to public safety, and many have family, friends or others who are willing to receive them. Unfortunately many who are eligible for compassionate release are unaware of their eligibility or need assistance in carrying out the petition.

Proposed Administrative Rule **DOC 302.41**, Extraordinary Health Condition or Geriatric Petitions, should be amended to require the DOC to review annually the entire prison population and identify those prisoners who may qualify for compassionate release. In addition, the DOC should assist those prisoners in completing the petition to be considered for compassionate release.

Further, nearly 2,000 prisoners in Wisconsin are legally eligible for parole. Many of these individuals have been in prison 15 or more years and have done everything possible to comply with the conditions of their release, yet DOC has not made programming and placements available so that the release plans determined by the Parole Commission can be implemented. The cost of continuing these parole-eligible inmates exceeds \$100 million per year.

Proposed Administrative Rules **DOC 302.14** and **DOC 302.15** should be amended to require that the primary consideration for program enrollment or review must be to give priority to implementation of plans determined by the Parole Commission.

Thank you for your consideration.